

Agriculture, Life and Veterinary Sciences and Cooperative Extension System **Leadership Fellows Program**

The Vice President for Agriculture, Life and Veterinary Sciences and the Cooperative Extension System proactively supports the professional growth and development of all employees. Investing in exceptional and exemplary appointed professionals and classified staff is a priority for the division's growth and future.

Until now, exceptional and exemplary appointed professional and classified staff employees have not had an overt mechanism for support of professional growth. Agriculture, Life and Veterinary Sciences and the Cooperative Extension System will proactively identify and deliberately develop future leaders through the **Leadership Fellows Program**.

Purpose of the Program

The purpose of this program is to provide transformational professional growth for appointed professional and classified staff (non-faculty) who highly exhibit leadership potential for joint advancement of the university and the individual.

What is the Program?

The program will pair a mentor with an exceptional and exemplary employee to offer individually tailored support. By definition, this program is highly selective. Not all those who apply will be selected.

Fellows are expected to be positive change agents. Individual influence on others is critical. Fellows will have formal mentors and must also be a formal mentor to others. Fellows will have "stretch" leadership projects, which will involve risk and challenge, and must be approved by the Vice President, to ground their learning and enhance growth. Upon acceptance, Fellows will finalize stretch leadership projects with their mentor.

The fellowship may support such things as, but not limited to, one or all of the following:

- academic qualification attainment
- professional certification
- professional leadership training

Regardless, a Fellow's plan must demonstrate that the program's activities:

- enhance the employee's current knowledge and skills
- directionally achieve the Fellow's longer-term leadership development goals
- benefit the university

Work-related professional development programs are often incremental. This fellowship is intended to be transformational. It requires more from applicants than ambition and an application.

It intends to challenge individuals to live up to exceptional and exemplary potential beyond what they may even believe that they have.

Eligibility

By its nature, this program is exceptionally selective. Applicants should recognize the college is investing in future higher education leaders. Applicants must consider that there are exceptional expectations on them and should, therefore, commit to give nothing but their best. Succession development, coaching, and mentoring to achieve the aims of this program are fundamental to candidates' success.

Criteria

- Applicants must be employed in CALS in a benefits-eligible appointment as either a staff or appointed professional (non-faculty) classification at the time of their nomination and throughout the fellowship.
- If the applicant were to no longer be employed by CALS or move into a faculty position, she/he would immediately lose eligibility, and no further fellowship obligation would exist. Eligibility expires on the last day of eligibility.
- Employees must be beyond the probationary period and have a verifiable record of exemplary and exceptional contribution throughout their entire employment history.
- Applicants must be in good employment standing throughout the period of funding, and must have received an overall performance of "exceeds" expectations or better (or equivalent performance) on their most recent two annual performance appraisals at the time of nomination. Annual performance appraisals are required by UA policies and endorsed and expected within our organization.
- Financially supported activity must be directly beneficial to and enhance and enable the employee's current work expectations and be directionally linked to their leadership development goals.
- Recurring or maintenance costs are not eligible for this program; this includes but is not limited to membership dues or continuing education credits.
- Applicant agrees to accept all tax consequences, if any, related to the fellowship funding.
- Each fellowship is unique and tailored to the individual. The college will require leadership service as part of each fellowship to be agreed to by the applicant, which will include ongoing expectations of service after the formal development plan is completed. "Alumni experiences" may be in service as an informal advisor to the VP or other senior college leaders, shared governance leader, chair committees, or other professional service.

Nomination

Employees must be nominated by one direct or indirect supervisor or a current or graduated Leadership Fellow. Direct applications and self-nomination will not be accepted. Applicants may reapply.

Nomination packets must include the following

- 1) A compelling nomination letter from the applicant describing a well-thought proposed growth plan, financial support requested, and how the professional development will support them in their work in our organization and future goals. The letter should also describe the transformational effect this fellowship will have on their career and our organization. Financial support must be requested in detail.
- 2) Letter from the proposed mentor/nominator. Nominators must be willing to serve as an active and engaged mentor to the nominee throughout the fellowship. Failure to do so will result in the fellowship being removed. Mentorship activities must be described by the mentor in the nomination letter.
- 3) Full nominee CV or résumé.

There is no page limit but brevity, clarity and cogency are advantageous. All listed documents must be submitted electronically as a single PDF file. **Click [here](#) for program news and information.**

By submitting an application, nominees and nominators consent to the College using their name, likeness, photo, story, or other personal attributes for publicity or promotional purposes.

Deadlines

Nominations are accepted once in the fall of each year. Open nomination will be communicated via the college listserv. Due to the time that will go into a decision and budget implications, nominations must be submitted at least three months before funding is required.

Decisions

Review Committee

A review committee will be convened and chaired by the Associate Dean for Finance and Administration to determine eligibility and prioritize the most impactful nominations.

The committee will be comprised of the sitting chairs of the CALS Staff and AP Councils, with future inclusion of past Fellows. Diversity and inclusion is a core value in CALS, and in the fellowship review process. Reviewers are professionally expected to recuse themselves should they have a potential conflict of interest. In addition, members of the review committee are not eligible to participate in the fellowship program.

Review Criteria

While every request will be, by its nature, unique, the decision will include the following review criteria at a minimum.

- Applicant is demonstrably exceptional and exemplary in their work and leadership abilities.
- Availability of funds.
- Strong probability for the recipient to make meaningful contributions towards stated organizational goals due to the fellowship, including a review of past performance and leadership potential.
- Commitment to the organization, attaining our goals and achieving our land grant mission.

- Description by the applicant of other funding sources that they have attained, and assessment of the importance of this fellowship, specifically, to the completion of the stated transformational activity.

Final Decisions

The final decision is made by the Vice President of Agriculture, Life and Veterinary Sciences and Cooperative Extension, or designee, in confidential concurrence with domain experts. Each decision is on a case-by-case basis, and is independent of prior decisions. Nominees and nominators will be advised in writing of the final decision.

Additional information may be requested or incorporated into each decision by the review committee or the VP. The decision by the VP is final with no right to appeal.

Submission

Nomination packets should be submitted electronically to this [email address](#).